



INDIANA COMMISSION
for
HIGHER EDUCATION

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Higher Education to Play Critical Role in New Economy

Today, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education adopted a framework outlining higher education's strategic role in Indiana's New Economy. The framework will guide the state's higher education system over the next several years.

The Commission recognized that ongoing declines in manufacturing jobs ultimately means that higher education will be the path to a secure economic future for many Hoosiers. To that end, the Commission called for increased college participation, more students taking college-prep courses in high school, more affordable tuition, and higher college degree completion rates.

"Higher education is now and will continue to be a crucial component in the lives of Hoosier students and their families and to the economic strength of the state," stated Stan Jones, Indiana's Commissioner for Higher Education. "This document provides strategic steps to continue to improve Indiana's higher education system during a time of limited resources."

An array of initiatives were identified as part of the strategic framework to include:

- Statewide expansion of the community college initiative in the fall 2004 semester. (The community college currently is at 10 sites and targeted to expand to 23 sites. The community college has added 21,639 additional students to Indiana's higher education system since fall 1999 representing an enrollment increase of 57%.)
- Increasing the number of high school seniors going to college immediately following graduation. (Currently, 60% of Indiana's high school graduates go directly to college ranking the state 17th nationally; this is up from 40th in 1986 with 37% of seniors attending.)
- Adopting Core 40 as Indiana's required high school curriculum, and establishing Core 40 as the minimum admission criteria to Indiana's four-year colleges. (Currently, 60% of Indiana's high school graduates complete Core 40, established in 1994 as the state's college-prep curriculum.)
- Moderating tuition increases by increasing state support and encouraging college restraint. (Tuition has risen 110% in ten years, twice the increase in family income. Tuition decisions are made by each college's board of trustees.)
- Attracting increased federal research funds to Indiana and developing degree programs focused on the "New Economy" (For the current biennium, the Indiana General Assembly appropriated \$31 million for New Economy degrees and economic development initiatives. The General Assembly also has appropriated \$18.4 million to provide

financial incentives for universities to attract more research dollars and appropriated \$129.2 million for new research facilities.)

- Reversing the “brain drain” in Indiana by attracting and retaining college graduates through college and business partnerships, internships, and career exploration opportunities with Indiana employers. (Each year, Indiana loses approximately 10,000 college graduates to other states, prompting the Lilly Endowment to announce a \$40 million initiative available for universities to assist in retention efforts).

Today’s actions by the Commission follows recent action taken by Indiana’s Education Roundtable in approving, *Indiana’s P-16 Plan for Improving Student Preparation for College Success*, a plan that aligns key policies across systems – from early learning and school readiness, to eliminating achievement gaps, to lifelong learning opportunities. Although both plans are distinct, the higher education framework was aligned to specific components of the Roundtable’s P-16 plan.

A full copy of the framework can be downloaded at the Commission’s website at <http://www.che.state.in.us>.

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